



## **DIGITAL SKILLS GAP SYMPOSIUM AND TOWN HALL**

**Co-Sponsored by the  
Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission  
and the  
Innovation and Access Working Group of the  
Communications Equity and Diversity Council, FCC**

**September 22, 2022  
12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Speaker Bios**

### **Welcome Remarks and Introduction of the Keynote Speaker**

**Susan Au Allen, National President and CEO, USPAACC, Vice Chair, CEDC**



Susan Au Allen came to the United States from Hong Kong on an invitation from the White House in recognition of her volunteer work for people with disabilities. She received her Juris Doctor from the Antioch School of Law and LL.M. in International Law from Georgetown University. During her 17 years with Paul Shearman Allen & Associates of Washington, DC and Hong Kong, she became nationally recognized for her work on immigration, international trade and investment. Upon receiving her law degree in 1984, Susan founded the US Pan Asian American Chamber of Education Foundation (USPAACC) with a group of business and civic leaders in Washington, DC and California, to bring the diverse Pan Asian American business and professional people together as one unified voice in business, commerce and trade. In 2001, she won two Federal cases for her small business clients, took sabbatical leave from her law practice, and became USPAACC National President & CEO. At USPAACC, Susan found her true calling in helping immigrants and new American citizens pursue their American Dreams through entrepreneurship and remained at USPAACC. Since then, she has changed the national landscape of minority business development and supplier diversity by adding thousands of qualified Pan Asian American businesses to the mainstream market place.

Susan serves a Vice Chair of the Federal Communications Commission's Equity and Diversity Council. In October 2021, under her leadership, USPAACC became one of eight national Tier 1 grantees of the \$100-Million Community Navigator Pilot Program administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Together with 43 regional Tier 2 and Tier 3 grantees, USPAACC helped America's small businesses hardest-hit by Covid-19 to retool, readjust, upscale, and grow. Susan loves music, enjoys reading and dancing, and has served on the Kennedy Center Community Advisory Board for more than 10 years.

Susan also speaks Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) and writes Chinese fluently.

## **Keynote Remarks**

**Mignon Clyburn**

**Former Acting Chairwoman, Federal Communications Commission**



Mignon L. Clyburn served as Commissioner on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) from 2009 to 2018 and acting chair from May to November of 2013. During her nearly nine years at the FCC, Commissioner Clyburn was committed to closing persistent digital and opportunity divides that continue to challenge rural, Native and low wealth communities. Specifically, she pushed for the modernization of the agency’s Lifeline Program, which assists low-income consumers in defraying the cost of voice and broadband service, championed diversity in media ownership, initiated Inmate Calling Services reforms, emphasized diversity and inclusion in STEM opportunities, and fought to preserve a free and open internet. Previously, Clyburn served 11 years on the South Carolina Public Service Commission. Prior to that, she was the publisher and general manager of the Coastal Times, a family-founded, Charleston-based weekly newspaper focusing on issues affecting the African American community. She is currently the principal of MLC Strategies, LLC. Clyburn is a graduate of the University of South Carolina and holds a BS in banking, finance and economics.

**Symposium Panel: Affordable Connectivity Program, Digital Equity Act and Other National Efforts to Address Broadband Access**

*Moderator*

**Heather Gate, Vice President of Digital Inclusion  
Connected Nation  
CEDC Chair**



As the Vice President of Digital Inclusion for Connected Nation (CN), Heather Gate is responsible for strategy development and implementation of programs that impact digital inclusion for all people in all places. Ms. Gate has more than 15 years of experience working in digital inclusion with the mission of improving the lives of vulnerable populations across the country via technology access, adoption, and use. She has extensive experience engaging with minorities, rural communities, families, and others on the frontlines of the digital divide and working behind the scenes as an advocate and tactician with local, state, and federal leaders.

Heather currently serves as the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Communications Equity and Diversity Council (CEDC). She previously served on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment (ACDDE) as the Chair of the Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group (2017-2019) and Vice-Chair of the full ACDDE (2019-2021).

## Symposium Panelists

**Angela Thi Bennett, Esq., MBA**  
**Digital Equity Program Director**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce, NTIA**



Angela Thi Bennett, a new addition to NTIA’s growing team, will direct the allocation of the \$2.75 billion Digital Equity Program and help develop guidelines for states to strategically utilize these funds to have a transformative impact in their communities. Angela said of her new role, “As my ability to serve scales to the national level, I remain steadfastly committed to amplifying marginalized voices, empowering local communities to drive solutions, and creating shared standards of metrics to inform interventions and create accountability.”

Throughout her career, Angela has focused on community work and improving the quality of life in her Cleveland and greater Ohio communities. Her vast community and public sector experience include leading East Cleveland’s department of community and economic development, serving as Superintendent of a community school in Cleveland, and the Ohio State Board of Education. In her previous work at a community-based internet service provider, she was instrumental in growing the customer base and helping over 1,500 individuals benefit from affordable digital access during the height of the pandemic. Angela is an advocate and ambassador for equity and inclusion, using her network and voice to elicit social change.

**Rashann Duvall**  
**Assistant Division Chief**  
**Wireline Competition Bureau**  
**Telecommunications Access Policy Division**



Rashann’s current portfolio at the FCC includes the Affordable Connectivity Program. Rashann serves on the FCC’s Digital Discrimination Task Force and has also served as the Co-Deputy Designated Federal Officer for the FCC’s Communications Equity and Diversity Council. While at the FCC, Rashann led the Connected Care Pilot Program and Round 1 of the FCC’s COVID-19 Telehealth Program, and has also been a senior team member on the Lifeline team. Prior to joining the FCC, Rashann was an assistant general counsel with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). She has also worked in private practice. Rashann received her undergraduate degree from Yale University, and her law degree from Harvard Law School.

**Sally Doty, Director  
Mississippi Broadband Office**



Sally Burchfield Doty was named by Governor Tate Reeves as the first director of the Office of Broadband Expansion and Accessibility of Mississippi (BEAM). The new office serves as the single point of contact for broadband policy, grant funding, and administration for the State of Mississippi. Sally most recently served as the Executive Director of the Mississippi Public Utilities Staff where she led a team of attorneys and accountants in reviewing and making recommendations on all filings before the Public Service Commission. Her team also administered \$75 million in CARES Act funding for broadband expansion and secured an additional \$32 million of federal funding for unserved areas. Prior to her service in the executive branch, Sally was elected to serve three terms in the Mississippi Senate representing Southwest Mississippi. In the legislature, Sally served as Chair of Judiciary A, Vice-Chair of Finance, and served on the Joint Legislative Budget Committee. In 2019, as Chair of the Energy Committee, Sally shepherded the bill allowing Mississippi Electric Cooperatives to enter the broadband business. An attorney, Sally has practiced law in Jackson and her hometown of Brookhaven. She received her law degree from Mississippi College School of Law and her undergraduate degree from Mississippi University for Women. Sally is adjusting to life as an empty nester and is looking forward to her first grandchild due in November.

**John Horrigan**  
**Senior Fellow, Benton Institute on Broadband & Society**



John B. Horrigan is Senior Fellow at the Benton Institute on Broadband & Society, with a focus on technology adoption and digital inclusion. Horrigan has served as an Associate Director for Research at the Pew Research Center and Senior Fellow at the Technology Policy Institute. During the Obama Administration, Horrigan was part the leadership team at the Federal Communications Commission for the development of the National Broadband Plan (NBP). For the NBP, Horrigan was responsible for the plan’s recommendations on broadband adoption.

Horrigan has a Ph.D. in public policy from the University of Texas at Austin and his undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia.

**Katherine Keegan**  
**Director, Office of the Future of Work**  
**Colorado Department of Labor & Employment**



Katherine began her career working with immigrants and refugees in Boston. This work led her to pursue a master's of science in social work at The University of Texas at Austin. Since then, Katherine has managed AmeriCorps, workforce readiness, and career coaching development programs in Texas, Indiana, and Colorado. In August 2019, she joined the Colorado Department of Labor & Employment as the Director of the Office of the Future of Work leading the state's efforts to raise awareness about the future of work, build digital equity, and through the State Apprenticeship Agency, expand access to registered apprenticeship programs.

**Angela Siefer**  
**Executive Director, National Digital Inclusion Alliance**



Angela Siefer is the executive director of the National Digital Inclusion Alliance. Angela has been working in the field we now call digital inclusion since 1997. From physically setting up computer labs in underserved areas and managing local digital inclusion programs to consulting for the US Department of Commerce and testifying before Congress, Angela develops national strategies and solutions from the ground up. In 2015, Angela helped found the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, a unified voice for home broadband access, public broadband access, personal devices, and local technology training and support programs. Angela serves on the Board of Directors of the Schools, Health, & Libraries Broadband Coalition. Government Technology Magazine named Angela one of their Top 25 Doers, Dreams, and Drivers of 2019, and in 2021, the UCC Media Justice Ministry awarded her the Parker Award.

## Digital Skills Gap Town Hall

### Opening Remarks

**Robert Brooks, Digital Solutions Specialist  
WHUR-FM, Howard University  
Chair, Innovation and Access Working Group, CEDC**



Robert J. Brooks' career embodies expertise in digital media, sales, broadcast, and content development, providing him the opportunity to serve on projects for reputable organizations such as NBC, Dish/Echostar, General Motors, The Kennedy Center, Bad Robot, Coca-Cola, News Corp, US Army, Beam Suntory, and the Dallas Mavericks.

Outside of serving as a Digital Solutions Specialist for Howard University's WHUR-FM 96.3, he is the chair of the Innovative and Access Working Group for the FCC's Communications Equity and Diversity Council (CEDC); Texas chapter president for National Association for Multi-ethnicity in Communications (NAMIC) and is a member of the Interactive Advertising Bureau's (IAB) Career & Professional Development Working Group, and Hollywood Radio and Television Society (HRTS).

Robert is a graduate of The Ohio State University, and earned his Masters from Brooklyn College CUNY, along with post graduate studies from SUNY Buffalo and a multitude of certifications from other entities. He is also a graduate of the Endeavor's Impact program, Urban One's Executive Mentorship Training Program, and the National Association of Broadcasters Educational Foundation's (NABEF) Broadcast Leadership Training Program.

## Digital Skills Gap Town Hall Moderators

**Matthew Bauer, Vice President and Executive Director  
Connected Communities, Wireless Research Center  
Lead, Digital Skills Workstream,  
Innovation and Access Working Group Member, CEDC**



Matthew's career arc follows a consistent theme: helping start, build and grow organizations while leveraging business and telecom as a positive force for people and the planet. He started his career with the House Telecom & Finance Subcommittee in the mid 80s and went on to co-found 3 companies and 1 nonprofit, including one of the first telcos (BetterWorld Technology) focused on social and environmental impact and a founding B Corp company. Matthew is a member of the FCC Communications Equity and Diversity Council and leads Connected Communities @ WRC (<https://www.wrc-us.org/>), with a mission to bring digital workforce development via DigitalBridge Hubs, entrepreneurship and advanced technologies to rural and underserved communities nationwide.

**Dr. Dianne Lynch, President  
Stephens College  
Subject Matter Expert,  
Innovation and Access Working Group, CEDC**



Dr. Dianne Lynch became the 24th president of Stephens College in June, 2009. Under her leadership, the College has developed a strategic focus on the creative and performing arts and the health sciences, earning national honors since 2019 in recognition of its communication design/student publications, performing arts and undergraduate research.

Dr. Lynch earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in mass communication and feminist history, and her Ph.D. in Art History and Communications from McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Her research focuses on the social identity development of digital natives – children growing up in online environments.

Prior to coming to Stephens in 2009, Dr. Lynch served as Dean of the Roy H. Park School of Communications at Ithaca College, and as a faculty member and chair of the Department of Journalism at Saint Michael's College in Burlington, Vt. She was also the founding executive director of the national Online News Association (ONA); the editorial director of the first national study of the credibility of online news; the editor of the first textbook on the ethics of digital news; and the inaugural recipient of the ONA's Rich Jaroslovsky Founder Award for contributions to digital journalism. She wrote a biweekly column about women and technology for ABCNews.com, and a weekly column on new media ethics for the *Christian Science Monitor*; was a longstanding member of the Journalism Advisory Board of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; and an inaugural member of the panel of judges for the Knight Foundation's News Challenge Awards competition. Dr. Lynch's national study of the future of American journalism and journalism education was commissioned by Knight.

Dr. Lynch was the 2019 recipient of the Mid-Missouri NAACP Distinguished Service Award. She was selected as among the 50 Missouri Top Influencers by the *Kansas City Star*, which sought perspective

and opinions from the group weekly prior to the 2018 midterm elections. In 2017 she was named by the *Columbia Business Times* as one of the ten most influential women in Columbia, Missouri. In 2016, she was the recipient of the Athena Leadership Award, presented annually in recognition of exceptional community service and career achievement.

Dr. Lynch serves on the Boards of Providence Bank, Boone Hospital Center, and the Lillian Kopenhaver Center for Women's Leadership at Florida International University, among others. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the American Midwest athletics conference, for which she served as president from 2012-2018.

Dr. Lynch is married to Philip Coleman. They have four children: Andrew, Amelia, Nick, and Annie.

**Leticia Latino-Van Spluteren, CEO**  
**Neptuno USA**  
**Innovation and Access Working Group Member, CEDC**



With over 25 years of experience in the Telecom Industry Leticia Latino went from working for Merrill Lynch and Telecom Giant Nortel Networks to accepting the challenge of extending the legacy of establishing her family business in the US back in 2002. Neptuno Group was originally founded by her father in 1972 in South America where they helped deploy some of the first Cellular Networks in the region and where they have built over 10,000 Towers.

Leticia is a recipient of several industry recognition awards such as ‘Revolutionary CEO’, ‘Smart Disruptor’ and has been named as one of the 30 most influential Leaders in Tech. She serves as an FCC Appointed member of the Telecommunications Interagency Working Group and on the Innovation and Access Working Group of the of the FCC’s Equity and Diversity Committee. She chaired the FCC’s Broadband Development Advisory Committee Jobs Skills and Training Working Group during the 2018-2020 term.

In addition, Leticia is a published author, public speaker, mentor to young women and a big advocate of nurturing ‘Human Connections’ through her Back2Basics Podcast. [www.leticialatino.com](http://www.leticialatino.com)

## Digital Skills Gap Town Hall Participants

**Susan Corbett, Founder**  
**National Digital Equity Center**  
**Innovation and Access Working Group Member, CEDC**



Ms. Corbett is a preeminent authority and advocate for digital equity and digital inclusion, and works closely with economic development and rural organizations to promote broadband adoption.

In the fall of 2017, Ms. Corbett founded and launched the **National Digital Equity Center**, collaborating with local and global change makers, relentlessly driving disruptive strategies to close the digital divide in Maine and across the United States. Ms. Corbett is the Executive Director of the National Digital Equity Center.

Ms. Corbett is the former Chief Executive Officer of **Axiom Technologies**, a provider and advocate of fast, affordable, and reliable broadband services for rural communities. In 2005, Ms. Corbett joined Axiom Technologies as Chief Financial Officer. Under her leadership, the telecommunications company designed and constructed more than 100 access points connecting more than 2,500 square miles in one of America's roughest terrains — rural Maine. She has written and managed numerous grants for broadband development and adoption.

Ms. Corbett is a public speaker, educator, and advocate who is dedicated to providing broadband access, digital equity and digital inclusion to rural communities everywhere.

**Dr. Jon P. Gant**  
**Professor and Dean, School of Library and Information Sciences**  
**North Carolina Central University**  
**Subject Matter Expert,**  
**Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group, CEDC**



Dr. Jon Gant is a leader in higher education who helps to make information and digital technologies accessible for everyone. Jon has led ground-breaking research with his colleagues that continues to help communities bridge the digital divide and improve access to the Internet. Jon's research helped advance the digital transformation of public sector organizations and examine the future of work and information technology in manufacturing. Jon and his colleagues from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill recently received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the Nutrition for Precision Health study to develop approaches for using artificial intelligence to improve health outcomes from more effective dietary routines. Jon served as the founding director of the Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI) at the School of Information at the University of Illinois. While leading CDI, Jon and his colleagues received funding from the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program to start up a university led public-private partnership that deployed a gigabit fiber network designed to serve households and business in Champaign and Urbana, IL. Jon led the strategy to connect underserved households located in internet deserts within the community. Jon led the CDI team to develop technical assistance models to help community anchor institutions worldwide use digital navigator models to scale up digital literacy training to over 17,000 people.

Using the lessons learned from these experiences, Jon is keenly focused on improving access to the digital skills and competencies of individuals needed to meeting emerging workforce and educational needs in our society. Currently, as dean of the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University, Jon leads the only accredited graduate program in the information field offered by a historically Black college and university in the US. Jon has helped to double its enrollment to over 330 graduate students while working nationally to advance how graduate programs in the information and library science field meet critically-needed digital skills and competencies in today's workforce and research enterprises.

Jon has also utilized this experience to serve on several advisory boards to make recommendations to the National Science Foundation, Federal Communication Commission, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services to address the digital divide and broadband adoption. Jon was recently appointed to the

Federal Communication Commission's Communication Equity and Diversity Council to examine critical diversity and equity issues across the tech sector. Jon serves on the Kettering Foundation's National Issues Forum Board of Directors. Jon was formerly the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Telecommunication Policy Research Conference (TPRC). Jon research and public engagement is funded through NIH, NSF, NTIA, IBM, State Farm Insurance, IMLS, OECD, ITU, among other organizations.

Jon received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Carnegie Mellon University where he trained in public policy and management. Jon earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan. He has held faculty positions in information systems and public administration previously at the University of Illinois, Syracuse University, and Indiana University.

**Kari Harsel Gray (she/her)**  
**Digital Equity Program Director**  
**Community Tech Network**



Ms. Gray has organized local, statewide, and national community-based education and resource events and programs for nonprofits, government agencies, and foundations. Kari currently oversees CTN's in-person and virtual Digital Literacy training programs funded by the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Department of Aging, and the City and County of San Francisco. CTN is an active member of the National Digital Inclusion Alliance and serves on several working groups. Prior to working with CTN, she has worked with the Earth Day Network to support local environmental organizers, the Ford Foundation to organize the first California statewide Wireless Summit, and the California Emerging Technology Fund to organize Computer Help Days throughout California and promote affordable Internet service programs.

**Allison Grubbs, Director  
Broward County Library, Florida**



Allison Grubbs is the Director of Broward County Library. She began serving Broward communities in 2019 when she was hired as Broward County Library’s Assistant Director, and since then has provided steadfast leadership through several challenges for the staff and local residents and visitors, especially with the onslaught of a once in a lifetime pandemic. Allison represents South Florida libraries in her work with the Florida Library Association, American Library Association, and the Urban Libraries Council.

Previous to her roles in Broward, Allison worked in special and public libraries serving rural, suburban, and urban communities of all sizes throughout Washington and Georgia. She received her undergraduate degree in history at North Georgia College and State University (now University of North Georgia), and her Master of Library and Information Science at Valdosta State University. Allison’s love language is caffeine.

**Elizabeth Gillum, Digital Navigator**  
**Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) Kentucky**



Elizabeth Gillum was born in Eastern Kentucky and attended Morehead State University. She has a passion for community service and broadband access. After graduating, she served as an AmeriCorps VISTA for Shaping Our Appalachian Region, an Eastern Kentucky think-tank working to fill the gaps left by the decline of the coal industry. She is currently the Digital Navigator for SOAR where she works to bridge the digital literacy gap in rural communities.

**Erica Hixon, North Carolina Program Director  
Digital Bridge, Wireless Research Center**



Erica Hixon, a native of Rome, Georgia, is passionate about equality for all. Throughout the years, Erica has grown to be familiar with providing for family and her community and has become a voice to the voiceless and a symbol of hope to those that think there is no chance.

Currently serving as, a Project lead for WRC Connected Communities -DigitalBridge, Erica has over 30+ years of technical experience in Information Technology, Semiconductor, Quality and Failure Analysis, Radio Frequency (RF) and Wireless/Cellular. In addition, Erica also serves as a Quality Manager and manages requirements for Certifications at WRC Wireless.

Erica's love for technology was the determining factor for her decision to attend DeVry University. While attending DeVry, Erica's love for technology expanded as she learned more about Troubleshooting, Coding, AC/DC, Circuit Analysis, and Digital Electronics. Upon graduation, Erica was selected to serve as an Engineering Tech for Mitsubishi Semiconductors of America. She quickly maneuvered through the company, earning a position as a Failure Analysis Engineer.

Throughout the years, Erica's held several positions to include Radio Frequency (RF) Tech and Process Tech with companies to include Renesas Design Engineer Center, Qimonda, and Mitsubishi Electric. Erica holds multiple degrees from DeVry University in Technical Management and Electronic Technology.

**Kermit Kaleba, Strategy Director for Employer Aligned Credential Programs  
Lumina Foundation**



Kermit Kaleba is the strategy director of employment-aligned credential programs for Lumina Foundation, an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. Kaleba leads a portfolio designed to increase the number of occupational short-term credential and AA degree programs.

Kaleba previously served as managing director for policy at National Skills Coalition. He also served as executive director of the Washington D.C. Workforce Investment Council. Kermit has J.D. and bachelor's degrees from the College of William and Mary.

**Alonso Meléndez, Digital Equity and Inclusion Coordinator  
Multnomah County Library  
Portland, Oregon**



I am Mexican-American originally from the Southwest, born in Douglas, Arizona, and have now lived in Oregon for over 30 years. I've had the opportunity and honor to have worked in Social Services for approximately 10 years. In every position held, I've focused on equity and inclusion, community engagement, advocacy and mentorship since the early 2000's. I was hired at Multnomah County Library in 2016, and currently serve as the library's Digital Equity & Inclusion Coordinator. In this position I focus on providing access for community members to computers, high speed internet, and digital skills training, as well as advocating for an increase in resources for digital access, policy and program review using an equity lens, and applying for grants to financially support computer classes, loaning equipment, and program development. My hope is to find more opportunities for professional development and continue to grow in my career path. My intention of providing support to communities experiencing marginalization and exclusion socio-economically derives from personal experiences as well as recognizing the negative impact in various communities created by oppressive practices.

**Pamela Price, RN, BSPH**  
**Deputy Director, The Balm In Gilead**



Pamela Price currently serves as the Deputy Director for The Balm In Gilead managing the various health initiatives of the organization. Under her leadership, the organization provides support to faith-based and public health institutions in areas of program design, implementation, and evaluation, which strengthen their capacity to deliver programs and services that contribute to the elimination of health disparities.

**Andrew Tein, Public Sector Partnerships and Customer Success  
Coursera**



As a Customer Success leader in Coursera's Government Partnerships group, Andrew partners with innovators and change agents across government, higher ed institutions and employers to build and implement workforce development partnerships that enable equity and lifelong opportunity at scale for learners and workers. Andrew has focused in on digital skills in particular, including as the Co-Chair of Project DARE (Data Analytics Raising Employment) and Closing the Digital Skills Gap forums, initiatives supported by the US Department of Labor and US Department of State focused on defining skill and competency pathways in high-demand careers.

Previously, Andrew was head of Global Government Affairs and Chief of Staff to the CEO at Wiley, the global research and education company. Before joining Wiley, Andrew was Director at C&M International, a Washington DC consultancy, and served in a range of international economic roles with the White House, U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC), Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and U.S. Department of State.

Andrew received his B.S. in International Economics from Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service and his MBA from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

**Dr. Harold Trulear, Associate Professor of Applied Theology  
Howard University School of Divinity  
National Director, Healing Communities**



Harold Dean Trulear, Ph.D. has served as Associate Professor of Applied Theology at Howard University School of Divinity since 2003. He currently teaches Prophetic Ministry, Ethics and Politics, Ministry and Criminal Justice, and Church and Community Studies. Dr. Trulear directs a national research and demonstration project called [Healing Communities](#) which mobilizes congregations to support those returning from incarceration through the establishment of family and social support networks.

With Charles Lewis and W. Wilson Goode, Dr. Trulear is co-editor of the book "[Ministry with Prisoners and Families: The Way Forward](#)" (Judson Press 2011). He also served as pastor of churches in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and he is currently a pastoral associate at Praise and Glory Tabernacle in Philadelphia. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Morehouse College (1975), he completed his Ph.D. with distinction at Drew University (1983).

Dr. Trulear is the author of over 100 articles, book chapters, essays and published sermons. His important monographs include "Faith Based Initiatives with High Risk Youth," "The African American Church and Welfare Reform," and "George Kelsey: Unsung Hero." He writes a weekly reentry column for DonDivaMag.com called "[Welcome Home](#)" and is a regular contributor to [The Capital Commentary](#) on criminal justice reform.

**Joseph Valandra, Sr., Vice President  
Tribal Communications, LLC**



Joseph Valandra is a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe of South Dakota. He has over wide-ranging business experience including an extensive background in Tribal economic development.

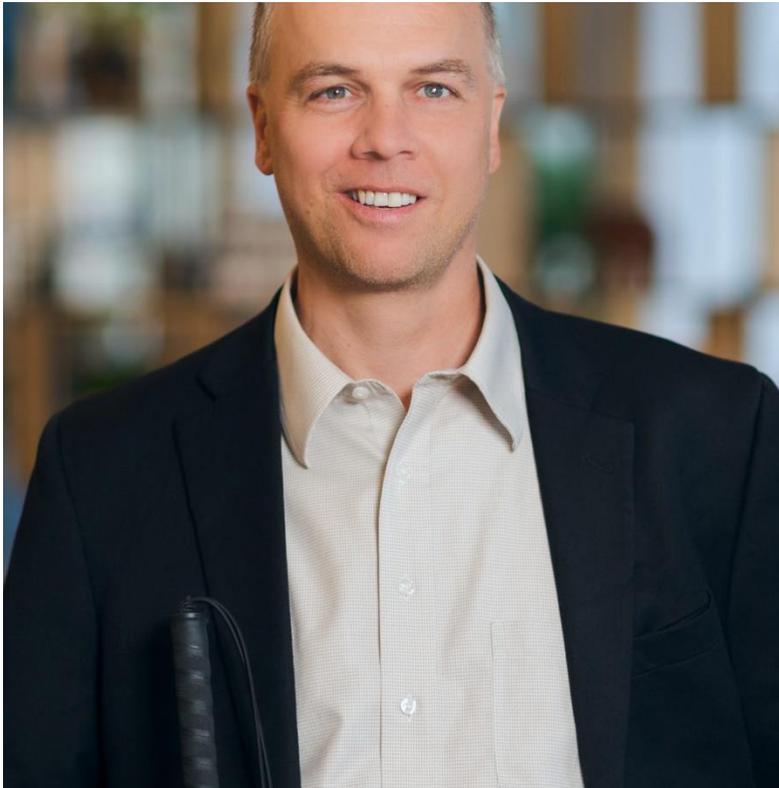
Mr. Valandra is the Sr. Vice President of Tribal Communications, LLC. The mission of Tribal Communications is to champion Tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and economic independence by creating Tribally owned and operated broadband & wireless services. We accomplish this by delivering trusted world-class consulting services to Tribal nations, entities, and enterprises and create solutions to the unique challenges Tribes face bringing high-speed broadband and wireless services to their communities.

Mr. Valandra served as the Executive Director of the Native American Contractors Association (“NACA”) for two years. Mr. Valandra also served as the Managing Director of VAdvisors, LLC a specialty advisory firm in Washington, DC founded in 2008. He also served as the Chief of Staff of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) in Washington, DC. the federal regulatory agency with Indian gaming oversight responsibilities.

Mr. Valandra has served in senior executive roles in both the private and public sectors, including Board Member of numerous companies in multiple industries. Using his collective experiences in government, business and gaming, Mr. Valandra has launched various ventures uniquely focused on the technological development, marketing, and deployment of products and services designed to benefit Native Nations.

Mr. Valandra lives in the Washington DC area with his spouse Kelly. Kelly and Joe have 3 adult children and 2 grandchildren.

**Jeff Wissel, Chief Accessibility Officer**  
**Disability:IN**



Jeff has a distinguished career with Fidelity Investments over the past 28 years. Jeff started Fidelity Investments as a Mutual Fund Representative and worked in a variety of roles including multiple Pilot Start up Roles. In March of 2010, Jeff obtained the Certified Financial Planning Certification, and in 2016, Jeff Founded the Fidelity Investments Enable Employee Resource Group. Today there are 5,147 active members.

In May of 2018, Jeff Co-Founded, and was the Director of the Fidelity Investments Office of Customer Accessibility. Since April 2020, Jeff established and was Director of the Fidelity Investments Procurement Accessibility Program.

Jeff is proud to say he is legally blind with a degenerative eye disease called Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP), and has been an avid user of assistive technologies including Screen Readers and Magnifiers for over two decades. Jeff has the IAAP CPACC Certification, the ADA Title II, III Coordinator Certification and is completing the DHS Trusted Tester Certification.

Jeff is married to his wife Carla of 24 years and they have two daughters, Trishna 19 and Mimi 15. The Wissel's live in Cincinnati Ohio.

**Juliet Fink Yates, Ed.M**  
**Digital Inclusion Manager, Office of Innovation & Technology**  
**City of Philadelphia**



Juliet Fink Yates has been working on addressing digital equity since 2001 when she was managing a small ISP for 10,000 low-income Philadelphians. For many years, she worked as the Chief Learning Officer at Philadelphia FIGHT Community Health Centers at the intersection of adult education, technology and healthcare. In 2010, she wrote, in collaboration with the City of Philadelphia, the broadband stimulus grant that brought \$5.4 million to low-income communities to set up computer labs (which became known as KEYSPTS) in 77 locations. She was a founder of the Technology Learning Collaborative, Philadelphia's first professional development organization dedicated to digital literacy providers and advocates and was a member of the City of Philadelphia's Digital Literacy Alliance until she joined the City of Philadelphia's Office of Innovation and Technology in March 2020 as the first Digital Inclusion Manager. In this role she has been working on major initiatives to close the digital divide, including the PHLConnectED program to ensure all preK-12 students have internet access, PHLDonateTech to get devices into the hands of those in need, and a larger Digital Equity Plan for the City of Philadelphia that will be a roadmap to ensure all residents have the internet access, devices, and skills needed for work and life. She has a Master's in Education from Harvard University Graduate School of Education with a focus on technology in education.

## Town Hall Summary

**Sherman Kizart, Managing Director and Founder  
Kizart Media Partners  
Innovation and Access Working Group Member, CEDC**



Sherman K. Kizart is founder and managing director of Kizart Media Partners, Inc. (KMP, Inc.). The company he launched in 2008 is a national media sales and marketing consulting firm headquartered in Chicago, Illinois that partners with clients to generate greater sales that focus on revenue opportunities for Urban targeted media platforms.

Kizart has acquired his expert knowledge from over 30 years of experience as a marketing specialist. He is one of the leading advocates and authorities in the U.S. on Urban Radio and multicultural media strategies and tactics. Prior to founding KMP, Inc., Kizart worked for Interep, Inc. as senior vice president and director of urban radio. He is recognized for his experience in the media and telecom industry.

He was appointed to serve on the FCC's Federal Advisory Committee on Diversity in the Digital Age (FCC) by the last 3 FCC Chairman in both Democratic and Republican Administrations. .

**Eve Lewis, Assistant City Attorney  
City of Coconut Creek, Florida  
Innovation and Access Working Group Member, CEDC**



Eve M. Lewis is a south Florida native with a passion for the safety and sustainability. Eve graduated from the University of Florida where she received a Bachelor of Science from the College of Journalism (Telecommunications) and a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science), as a dual major. Then she earned her Juris Doctorate, graduating cum laude, from Nova Southeastern University’s Shepard Broad Law Center. Currently, Eve works for the City of Coconut Creek, Florida, as an Assistant City Attorney. Eve is a Florida Bar Board Certified Expert in City, County, and Local Government Law. She’s been practicing for more than a decade providing legal counsel on various areas of the law, including but not limited to criminal justice, public governance, business transactions, procurement, environmental conservation, land planning, employment, construction, ethics, regulatory licensing, public utilities and franchises, and information technology.

In the past and present, Eve continues to serve and advance the public welfare through initiatives at every level: federal, state, and local. In 2019, Eve was appointed by the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) to serve a two (2) year term on the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee, and currently serves on the Innovation and Access Working Group of the FCC’s Communications Equity and Diversity Council. Before working in local government, Eve worked as an Assistant State Attorney prosecuting criminal cases involving habitual felony offenders, career criminals, and habitual violent criminals. In her spare time, Eve serves as the chairperson of an advisory board overseeing a local park near where she lives in the City of Pompano Beach, Florida.

Eve has an insatiable thirst for learning and strives to enrich the community at every opportunity. She has a loving husband and two beautiful daughters who inspire and support her in achieving her goals.